

FSA.

FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS' ASSOCIATION

STOP EXPLOITING LOYALTY

(A BLUEPRINT)



WHAT IS A CLUB IN ANY CASE?

NOT THE BUILDINGS OR THE DIRECTORS OR THE PEOPLE WHO ARE PAID TO REPRESENT IT. IT'S NOT THE TELEVISION CONTRACTS, GET-OUT CLAUSES, MARKETING DEPARTMENTS OR EXECUTIVE BOXES.

IT'S THE NOISE, THE PASSION, THE FEELING OF BELONGING, THE PRIDE IN YOUR CITY.

SIR BOBBY ROBSON

STOP EXPLOITING LOYALTY: A BLUEPRINT

Sir Bobby Robson's quote encapsulates just what football means and acts as a blueprint for the FSA's Stop Exploiting Loyalty campaign.

But the traditions, values and supporter culture that have made English football the envy of the world are under threat from escalating ticket prices, commercialisation and corporate greed.

The Stop Exploiting Loyalty blueprint takes aim at those threats and the growing disconnect between many clubs and their loyal supporters. Beneath the marketing slogans and grand displays of supporter culture lies a harsh reality - modern football is exploiting the very people who helped build it.

The game risks losing its heart.

Football has always been shaped by those who control it, and billionaire owners - no matter where they're from - have shown time and again that they will put short-term profit first.

We have no "preferred" nationality when it comes to private ownership, football is a global sport, the Premier League is the most successful league, and it's obvious that it will attract interest from some of the wealthiest people on the planet. They want the shiniest toys.

This means 17 of the 20 top-flight clubs are owned by overseas owners (with 11 of those majority shareholders being US companies or citizens). Owners often aren't connected to the local communities, don't spend any time with normal supporters, and are not properly informed by a club's executive, so problems are inevitable.

Throw into the mix US cultural sporting norms and it's a dangerous mix, as predicted by League Managers' Association boss Richard Bevan who, as far back as 2011, warned about the desire of some owners to end promotion and relegation. Closed shop leagues. Games abroad. Dynamic pricing. US sports do this but we won't accept it.

In October 2025 it was even reported that Manchester United were exploring whether to introduce "personal seat licences" (PSL) should they move stadium. This idea comes from US sports and means you'd have to buy a "licence" before you even pay for a season ticket! They cost thousands of dollars.

The European Super League proposal showed just how out of touch some owners were - and despite being defeated on that they seem intent on proposing yet more shockingly bad ideas.



STOP EXPLOITING LOYALTY

RISING TICKET PRICES:

Despite promises to keep football accessible, ticket prices have soared well beyond inflation since COVID.

ATTACKS ON CONCESSIONS:

Clubs have systematically reduced discounts for younger, older and even disabled fans, making it harder for families and lifelong supporters to attend matches.

FAILURE TO LISTEN:

Decisions affecting supporters, from ticket pricing to fixture scheduling, are too often made without proper engagement. We tell, but they don't listen.

LOCAL CULTURE IGNORED:

Constant threats to play games abroad risk sidelining the traditions and community focus of English football.

CALLS FOR CHANGE

FREEZE TICKET PRICES:

Clubs must ensure that matchday tickets remain affordable, with pricing structures that respect the loyalty of long-standing fans. Keep the £30 away cap.

COMMITMENT TO CONCESSIONS:

Young, older and disabled supporters must be protected from disproportionate price hikes.

PROTECT FOOTBALL CULTURE:

A global TV audience is not an excuse for owners to price out the local audience. The game must remain accessible to communities around our stadiums.

CLUBS MUST LISTEN:

Fans should have a meaningful say in decisions that affect their experience and the future of the game.

FOOTBALL FOR ALL

Some in the game cynically argue that new ticket policies are just an attempt to open the live game up to new audiences. To move away from crowds made up of middle aged blokes and broaden the demographics. Our response?

Football is for all, it's at the core of what we do, and our Fans for Diversity initiative has introduced thousands of new supporters from a range of backgrounds to the live match experience.

But clubs deploy the "new audiences" spiel while, in reality, only opening the game up at the top level to those who will show them the money. How many new affordable family deals or new concession areas have been set aside by the biggest clubs? Is that inclusive?

According to Trafford Council, one in three children live in poverty in some wards of the borough from which Manchester United operates. Everton's new £800 million stadium has been constructed in Liverpool Riverside, England's most deprived constituency.

Some of our richest clubs reside in our poorest areas - areas that can be incredibly diverse in terms of ethnicity and culture. Which elite clubs are truly reaching out to youngsters in those areas on their doorstep? How many special offers at affordable prices are promoted by clubs?

If a club uses a city or community's name, it owes a permanent debt to that area - yet stadiums can be gleaming monoliths which local, football-mad residents can never enter.

The consequences of these pricing strategies have been devastating.

Football was once a family tradition, with generations standing or sitting together, but that is increasingly unaffordable at the top level as the game becomes a luxury good, inaccessible to many within the communities that clubs are supposed to represent.



FOOTBALL HAS A SPENDING PROBLEM, NOT AN INCOME PROBLEM

In 2024/25 19 Premier League clubs put their prices up and this was followed by 13 of the 20 clubs doing the same in 2025/26.

Alongside this we have seen attacks on concessions for younger fans, OAPs and even disabled supporters all against a backdrop of ticket prices rising 20% since COVID according to the Premier League's own data.

A 2024 Ipsos survey found that "three-fifths of UK adults who attend live football matches cite rising ticket prices as a serious issue". This chimes with FSA data - in 2023 a quarter of supporters told us they were attending fewer games with 30% of those citing high prices.

In August 2025 Ipsos found that 71% of fans believe traditional supporters are being priced out, with 76% supporting a ticket price cap.

Football is becoming a luxury good for some, pricing out working-class communities, young supporters and families who represent the future heartbeat of the game.

Record broadcast revenues - the 2025-28 deal is worth £12.25bn - and packed corporate hospitality sections tell us that financial sustainability does not depend on pricing out traditional supporters.

As Match of the Day presenter Mark Chapman has pointed out: "Ticket revenue is a really small percentage of what clubs bring in compared to their overall commercial revenue."

GREED NOT NEED - HIGH TICKET PRICES ARE A CHOICE



What price is the colour, passion and noise of our grounds? How can a balance sheet reflect the atmospheres generated by our famous old stands? These are the very things which create the huge demand from tourists, making the Premier League such a pull worldwide.

With the help of data from the excellent Swiss Ramble we considered the finances of six Premier League clubs and, as a percentage of overall revenue, matchday income ranged from 7% (Brentford) to 13% (Liverpool).

Squeezing fans will likely raise £2-3 million at the very biggest clubs, less again at those with smaller grounds. Loose change when it comes to transfer fees and player wages.

You can make a strong case that it's in the interest of most clubs to put a league-wide limit on price rises, as they disproportionately benefit the biggest clubs who can already generate far higher matchday incomes thanks to their global appeal.

Football must not lose sight of what made it great: the passion, loyalty, and dedication of its supporters. Clubs must act now to stop exploiting loyalty and work towards a future where football remains a game for the people, not just for profit.

LISTEN TO SUPPORTERS. ENGAGE MEANINGFULLY. MAKE REAL CHANGE.

WHERE DID IT ALL GO WRONG?

In 1991, The FA's Blueprint for the Future of Football claimed that changes in the sport would improve conditions for fans and make football more accessible.

The Taylor Report, delivered following the Hillsborough disaster, envisaged stadiums full of families, with affordable tickets ensuring that everyone, regardless of background, could enjoy the game they loved.

Lord Taylor said: "It should be possible to plan a price structure which suits the cheapest seats to the pockets of those presently paying to stand." He suggested a £6 ticket price - the equivalent of £14 today.

The Premier League was formed and football's popularity exploded on the back of Italia 90.

Ticket prices long ago outstripped Taylor's ideas and, while we've had some successes such as a £30 away cap in the Premier League, clubs have not listened to fan concerns in home ends.

The cheapest adult ticket for some Premier League matches now exceeds £50, with Manchester United stretching it to £66 for everyone, even kids. Aston Villa were labelled "out of touch" after charging £97 for a Champions League ticket last season. We could easily go on.



Whenever clubs talk about a "small increase" remember it is on the back of already sky high prices.

It's not an issue exclusive to the Premier League, either. Prices for Champions League games, domestic cup competitions and fixtures in the EFL can vary wildly too.

So many involved in running the game over the years have made no secret of the fact that this is what they want. They see supporters not as stakeholders, not as active participants, not as part of the show but as customers - their loyalty a commodity to be monetised.

WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST

"I DON'T THINK IT MAKES SENSE FOR A MANCHESTER UNITED TICKET TO COST LESS THAN A TICKET TO SEE FULHAM."

SIR JIM RATCLIFFE (MANCHESTER UNITED CO-OWNER)

"ULTIMATELY I HOPE THE PREMIER LEAGUE TAKES A LITTLE BIT OF A LESSON FROM AMERICAN SPORTS, AND REALLY STARTS TO FIGURE OUT, WHY DON'T WE DO A TOURNAMENT WITH THE BOTTOM FOUR SPORTS TEAMS, WHY ISN'T THERE AN ALL-STAR GAME?"

TODD BOEHLY (CHELSEA CO-OWNER)

"I'M DETERMINED ONE DAY TO HAVE A PREMIER LEAGUE GAME BE PLAYED IN NEW YORK CITY. I EVEN HAVE THE SORT OF CRAZY IDEA THAT THERE WOULD BE A DAY WHERE WE PLAY ONE GAME IN TOKYO, ONE GAME A FEW HOURS LATER IN LOS ANGELES, ONE GAME A FEW HOURS LATER IN RIO, ONE GAME A FEW HOURS LATER IN RIYADH."

TOM WERNER (LIVERPOOL CHAIRMAN)

"I WOULD LOVE TO SEE A COUPLE OF PREMIER LEAGUE GAMES OPEN THE SEASON HERE IN BIG STADIUMS ON OUR OPENING WEEKEND. AND I KNOW THAT'S SOMETHING THAT WE'LL CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR BECAUSE I THINK THAT THERE'S AN AMERICAN AUDIENCE HERE THAT WOULD LIKE TO SEE REGULAR SEASON GAMES."

JON MILLER (NBC SPORTS EXECUTIVE)

"ENFORCING UPON FOOTBALL A PHILOSOPHY AKIN TO MAOIST COLLECTIVE AGRICULTURALISM - WHICH STUDENTS OF 'THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD' WILL KNOW CULMINATED IN THE GREATEST FAMINE IN HISTORY - WILL NOT MAKE THE ENGLISH GAME FAIRER, IT WILL KILL THE COMPETITION WHICH IS ITS VERY LIFEBLOOD."

ANGUS KINNEAR (EX-LEEDS UNITED CEO, NOW EVERTON) COMPARING THE FAN-LED REVIEW OF FOOTBALL GOVERNANCE TO A CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY POLICY WHICH KILLED 55M PEOPLE

STOP EXPLOITING LOYALTY AIMS:


- TICKET FREEZE AND AFFORDABLE FOOTBALL
 - END THE ATTACK ON CONCESSIONS
 - PROTECT THE MATCHGOING CULTURE
 - SUPPORT LOCAL CAMPAIGNS


ACTION FOR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS:

AT EVERY PREMIER LEAGUE CLUB WE ARE SEEING ACTIVITY AND CAMPAIGNS AROUND THIS ISSUE. JOIN YOUR LOCAL SUPPORTERS' GROUP - GET INVOLVED ON MATCHDAYS AND SHARE MESSAGES ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

Don't know which group to approach? Contact us and we'll point you in the right direction.

CONTACT THE FSA:

 info@thefsa.org.uk

 [WeAreTheFSA](#)

JOIN THE FSA:



WANT TO DO MORE?

Our member supporter groups at clubs across the country need your help and support, so they should be your first port of call. However, if you'd like to do more, there are plenty of options.

For kick-off how about sharing the [#StopExploitingLoyalty](#) message on social media and in the football media? You could also try writing to your club's CEO expressing concerns and making your voice heard in the local media and via local supporters' groups.

Many MPs also support the principles behind [#StopExploitingLoyalty](#) so you could seek out their backing and support in lobbying your club, especially if they are a matchgoing fan.



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FSA.

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